



Schoharie County Operations Review Committee

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Alicia Terry - Chair

Gilboa Supervisor

Harold Vroman

Summit Supervisor

Alan Tavenner

Schoharie Supervisor

Eric Stein

President & CEO Cobleskill Regional Hospital

Dan Crandell

Public Works Commissioner

Bonnie Post

Director of Community Services

John Riedl

Superintendent, Margaretville Central School (Retired)

Schoharie County Operations Review Committee:

December 13, 2021

Present: Alicia Terry, Dan Crandell, Eric Stein, Bonnie Post, Harold Vroman, John Riedl, Alan Tavenner

Also Present: Michael West, Esq. (County Attorney), CJ Smith (Personnel Director), Steve Wilson (County Administrator), Mary-Ann Wollaber-Bryan (Treasurer), Mark Southworth, Sheryl Largeteau (Clerk of the Board of Supervisors), Scott Haverly (IT Director), Donna Becker (DSS Commissioner), Mike Hartzel (Director of Emergency Services), Peggy Hait, Karen Wellman, Rebecca Stanton-Terk (Village of Cobleskill Mayor), Amy Gildemeister, Ph.D. (Public Health Director), Indy Jaycox (County Clerk), and Kayla Redmond

Alicia Terry brought the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

The Committee took a moment of silence for those affected by the tornadoes in the Midwest of the United States.

Alan Tavenner moved to approve the minutes from November 29, 2021. Eric Stein provided a second and the motion was carried 7-0.

Alicia Terry began the meeting with discussion from the Committee on additional thoughts regarding the November meeting.

Dan Crandell asked for clarification on the Committee's mission. He noted the three issues that have been presented during the previous meetings:

1. Reorganization of the Schoharie County departments and creation of a new department
2. New employee and salary benefits
3. Software purchase

Alicia Terry stated that the Committee was asked to review the "Kicking the Can Down the Road" report to provide the whole Board of Supervisors a recommendation on how to move forward with

all these issues. She mentioned that the initial focus was to combine all the issues into one recommendation.

The Committee shares similar concerns and thoughts on recommending all components to the Board of Supervisors. Dan Crandell and Alan Tavenner suggested for the Committee to recommend the software purchase before moving forward with the other issues at hand.

Alicia Terry stated she can discuss the struggles the Committee is having in deciding to recommend all components of the project with the full Board of Supervisors.

Dan Crandell explained that these components have been a topic of discussion during the department head meetings. They all agree on the need for a new software program. The departments could submit planned reports for review instead of going through the County reorganization process explained in the proposal.

Alan Tavenner said that although the benefits are great, a new software program will not fix all the problems. He discussed the need for a central person to be in charge year to year to handle grants and budgets for project funding.

Steve Wilson updates the Committee on his work. He mentioned the proposal has been a topic of discussion among the county employees. He also talked about his findings that some people are in support of the proposal while others feel they need more information. There are concerns of the impact civil service may have on the employees' positions. His belief is that people want more detail on why this is thought to be the least expensive and most effective proposal. They also want to know what the other proposals were that Steve Wilson considered before deciding on this one. Steve Wilson admits more details are needed to be worked out. He explained that the first step in making a proposal as in depth as this one is discussion. He congratulates everyone for their questions and participation in this discussion. Steve Wilson emphasizes the importance of keeping some components imbedded in the office that the employee supports.

Alicia Terry moved to the next agenda item and offered privilege to the floor.

Peggy Hait provided the Committee with her concerns of the reorganization of the departments. She also expressed concerns of the salary for the new hire; especially now that the 2022 budget has been completed and agreed upon. She gave her approval for the software package.

Attorney Mike West stated that this is not the first time the County has looked to reorganize departments. He stated it is important to update and modernize to improve. Attorney West also noted that these issues are stressful and complicated, and it will take time to resolve them.

Donna Becker (Dept. of Social Services Commissioner) stated that she could have brought information and reports to meetings had she been asked to do so. She expressed her concern about employees leaving due to management changes because staff members have expressed fear of the plans to reorganize.

Mike Hartzel (Director of Emergency Services and Vice Chair of the Department Head Association) had been asked by the Department Head Association to read a letter to the Committee concerning their issues with the proposal. The letter addressed the following:

1. Not enough information has been provided to make reorganization of departments feasible.

2. A working committee between the department heads and County Administrator should be established.
3. The proposal has not been adequately explained and there are too many unknowns regarding cost and operations. It would be more reasonable to make inhouse changes and planned reporting.
4. Training on how the County Administrator's Office works never occurred.
5. The Deputy County Administrator position should go through the normal hiring process.

Alan Tavenner and Dan Crandell expressed the need for better partnership between the Board of Supervisors and the department heads.

Maryann Wollaber-Bryan (Treasurer) stated she has worked to pull different reports to submit to the Board of Supervisors for review. She asked if they could build on what is already in place without the need of adding another layer of government.

Alicia Terry responded to Becky Stanton-Terk that the Committee was formed after inefficiencies were found within the County Government system in an effort to resolve those issues. Alan Tavenner added there is a lack of information on what is being spent versus what is being budgeted. He stated that the Board of Supervisors do not have the tools at times or know the right questions to ask to.

Alan Tavenner asked if any alternatives were established to this proposal.

Steve Wilson noted he had an alternative approach, but he felt it was not cost effective. This approach would not require taking people from existing departments; however, it would require adding additional staff.

Amy Gildemeister asked that the Board of Supervisors ask department heads for reports specific to information they wish to obtain.

Alan Tavenner moved to recommend the Enterprise Resource Management System to the full Board of Supervisors. Dan Crandell provided a second and the motion is carried 7-0.

A new date is decided, Alan Tavenner moved to adjourn the meeting. Bonnie provided a second and the motion was carried 7-0 at 9:51am.

Recorded by:

Kayla Redmond